UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
51st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 1 December 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 51st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KRENKEL (Austria)

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* Items considered together.

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92-58076 6471S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.3/47/SR.51
9 December 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

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(b) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (continued) (A/47/24 and Add.1, A/47/353, 434, 445, 479, 501, 502, 503, 504, 552, 626, 630, 668, 701 and 702; A/C.3/47/L.49)

(c) HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES (continued) (A/47/367 and Add.1, A/47/418-S/24516, A/47/596, A/47/617, A/47/621, A/47/625, A/47/635-S/24766, A/47/651, A/47/656, A/47/666-S/24809, A/47/676; A/C.3/47/L.48)

AGENDA ITEM 149: THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ESTONIA AND LATVIA

1. Mr. MZUMACHARO (Malawi), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the harsh allegations made against his country by the representative of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the European Community, and by the representative of the United States were exaggerated and, at that point, unnecessary. Faced with false accusations prompted by Malawi dissidents, his Government had embarked on a vigorous and open campaign to reaffirm its commitment to human rights and to redress the human rights situation in the country. Malawi citizens were not subject to extra-judicial detention and had recourse to due process. The security and political stability of the country was not threatened by violence or terrorist activity of any kind. Political opponents were neither repressed nor harassed; indeed, there was ongoing dialogue between opposition leaders and the Government. Recently, the Life President of Malawi had announced a national referendum to allow the people to choose whether they wished to continue with the existing one-party democracy or return to a multiparty system. The United Nations was playing an active role in preparing for the referendum.

2. Mr. RAHMAN (Pakistan), speaking in exercise of the first right of reply, said that in his statement on 25 November 1992, the representative of India had made several baseless allegations against Pakistan. India was not only carrying out a genocidal campaign in Kashmir but was also continuing to disseminate the same duplicitous propaganda in the hope that repetition would make its position credible.

(Mr. Rahman, Pakistan)

3. India had stated that Kashmir was an integral part of India. His delegation strongly disagreed. According to the relevant Security Council resolutions, the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir would be decided by a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations. Despite India's endorsement of that solution, the dispute still had not been settled and remained on the Security Council's agenda.

4. Pakistan condemned terrorism in all its forms. In that connection, he wished to draw attention to the conclusions of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, which had condemned the use of State power to suppress citizens struggling against foreign occupation and had recognized that their struggle for self-determination did not constitute terrorism.

5. The Kashmiri peoples were unanimous in wanting freedom from Indian rule. Since the line of control was heavily mined and patrolled, Pakistan could not interfere in Indian-held Kashmir even if it wished to do so. The solution was simple: India had only to accept Pakistan's proposal to station impartial observers along the line in order to verify Indian allegations of Pakistani interference.

6. While repeatedly affirming its commitment to democracy, India had never implemented that principle in Jammu and Kashmir. The disputed territory had been placed under President's rule and draconian security laws empowered Indian security forces to arrest Kashmiri citizens and detain them for long periods of time. A 1991 amendment to the criminal code gave government officials immunity from prosecution for any act committed under President's rule.

7. India was carrying out a policy of genocide against the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir. The Bhartia Janata Party of India had openly declared its wish to "cleanse" Kashmir of its Muslim majority either through expulsion or forcible conversion. In fact, the Muslim population of India was subject to widespread discrimination, destruction of their places of worship and assassinations.

8. Ms. MANIMEKALAI (India), speaking in exercise of first right of reply, said that Jammu and Kashmir was and would continue to be an integral part of India. The problem in Kashmir was the result of State-funded terrorism originating in Pakistan, whose aim was to strike at the roots of India's secular foundations. The human rights of minorities in Kashmir were being violated on a daily basis. Those violations were well-documented by impartial sources. For example, a report from the United States Department of State referred to continuing credible reports in 1991 of official Pakistani support for Kashmiri militant groups engaged in terrorism in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

(Ms. Manimekalai, India)

9. She failed to understand why Pakistan had to speak for minority groups in India, whose forebears had chosen to remain in that country rather than to emigrate to Pakistan. Minority groups in Pakistan itself were hardly free from discrimination.

10. All things considered, India's response to Pakistani provocations had been quite restrained. India did not want regional tensions to escalate. It wished to enter into a dialogue with Pakistan with a view to normalizing and improving bilateral relations. The Simla Agreement, which had been endorsed by both countries and which effectively nullified all previous Security Council resolutions, would provide an excellent framework for such a dialogue.

11. Mr. RAHMAN (Pakistan), speaking in exercise of second right of reply, said that the Indian statement was yet another attempt to hoodwink the Committee through distortion and slander. There was no denying that Indian authorities were violating human rights on a massive scale. Furthermore, it was clear that the future of Kashmir must be decided by its own people.

12. His country was ready to enter into meaningful dialogue with the Indian Government with a view to resolving all outstanding disputes, including that of Jammu and Kashmir, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and in the spirit of the Simla Agreement. It hoped that India would agree to its reasonable proposals.

13. Ms. MANIMEKALAI (India), speaking in exercise of second right of reply, said that the motives behind Pakistan's charges of human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir were all too obvious and must be viewed in the context of Pakistan's clear designs on Kashmir.

14. Mr. NEUMANN (Guatemala) said that his Government welcomed the fact that Venezuela had overcome its recent constitutional crisis and wished to offer its full cooperation to Venezuela in its efforts to safeguard democracy.

15. Human rights in Guatemala had to be viewed in the context of the armed conflict through which his country had suffered. It had been determined that 95 per cent of the human rights violations in Guatemala had been an outgrowth of the armed conflict. However, in 1991, the President of Guatemala had introduced a peace initiative with a view to ensuring a comprehensive and lasting peace, built on a foundation of economic and social equality and a viable system of justice.

16. Within the framework of the peace negotiations, his Government had pledged to prevent the formation of more civilian patrols which had been organized earlier to defend the population against the insurgents. It had also appointed a public prosecutor for human rights to ensure that membership in any civilian patrols that might be created remained voluntary. The Government had also set up a national commission for repatriates, refugees and

(Mr. Neumann, Guatemala)

displaced persons and had established a National Peace Fund to ensure respect for their economic, social and cultural rights. Those efforts had led to a recent agreement to allow the return to Guatemala of more than 40,000 refugees.

17. His Government had set up a presidential commission on human rights to ensure effective implementation of those rights and to coordinate the efforts of the institutions involved in achieving that goal. It had also requested United Nations assistance in structuring a national human rights programme, to be launched in early 1993.

18. His Government had repudiated the principle of impunity and made substantial efforts to bring to justice all those who had violated human rights, regardless of the status of the perpetrators. It was also striving to ensure the safety of Guatemalan citizens by restructuring and reactivating the police force, extending the court system to all municipalities and adopting a new code of penal procedure, under which hearsay evidence was admissible as proof. It had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and was currently considering legislation which would further enhance human rights.

19. Guatemala's Office of the Attorney General had been greatly strengthened. During the past two years, it had tried a number of civil and military officials for violations of human rights. Its budget had been doubled, providing the necessary resources for investigating and bringing to trial those responsible for violations of human rights.

20. His country counted on the understanding and support of the international community to help it create a just and equitable system for its citizens. In that connection, special priority must be given to protecting the rights of indigenous peoples. Indeed, the International Year for the World's Indigenous People could be considered the year of Guatemala, whose population was composed largely of such peoples.

21. His Government was engaged in a number of activities designed to increase the participation of indigenous populations in the planning, execution and assessment of projects and policies affecting them. Noteworthy among those activities was the work of the council of indigenous advisers on a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples; consideration by the Congress of the ILO Convention on indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries; dissemination of Mayan sacred texts; and exchange of information and experience between indigenous communities, with particular emphasis on recognizing the Mayan approach to health and the environment. Guatemala also took great pride in the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to one of its most valued citizens, Rigoberta Menchu.

22. His Government paid particular attention to the problem of street children and had set up a national programme to deal with it including a

(Mr. Neumann, Guatemala)

special office for minors, which was responsible for coordinating activities in that field, evaluating the situation and developing realistic policies.

23. After 30 years of internal conflict, Guatemala was committed to conducting education programmes in the field of human rights at all levels, including the national police and the army, in order to establish firmly the foundations of its new democracy. The United Nations, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights and the Guatemalan Attorney-General's Office for Human Rights provided advisory services for that project.

24. In order to improve access by women to employment opportunities, his Government was reorienting training programmes, creating an infrastructure for working women and reviewing national legislation relating to young women in order to eliminate inequality. Guatemala needed the understanding and support of the international community in order to continue building the foundation for true democracy. The United Nations, particularly the Commission on Human Rights, should firmly support his country's efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation in order to ensure full enjoyment of human rights.

25. Miss GOH (Singapore) said that her country was committed to the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and at the same time firmly believed that rights could not be divorced from the responsibilities and obligations which derived from their social context. Accordingly, those rights must be exercised with strict regard for the family and the community, of which the individual was an integral part. Regrettably, there was a tendency to overemphasize the rights of the individual, without underscoring the equally important responsibilities and duties of the person to the family and society.

26. Experience showed that the unregulated exercise of certain rights could impede the enjoyment of other rights or prevent others in the society from enjoying their rights. In a small, multi-ethnic society, it was often necessary to place limits on the extent to which individual groups could exercise their religious and cultural rights in order to preserve harmony.

27. Singapore had adopted policies that enabled all citizens to enjoy their rights while at the same time respecting the rights of other ethnic and economic groups and attempting to maintain a balance among them. Unfettered capitalism, for example, could lead to gross inequalities in living standards and economic insecurity, which hindered the individual's full enjoyment of social and economic rights. Since political, civil, social and economic rights were interrelated, the enjoyment of one set of rights was often made possible by the enjoyment of the other rights.

28. The ultimate objective must be the preservation and promotion of the dignity of the individual. In that connection, her delegation agreed with the view that economic well-being was an essential right and supported the right

(Miss Goh, Singapore)

to development. The promotion of human rights should also include respect for the different value that societies placed on different human rights. In some Asian societies, for example, the right to a decent standard of living might be more important for the individual than an unimpeded right to self-expression. Consequently, the promotion of human rights should be non-selective, impartial and broad-based and should take into account the social, cultural, religious and traditional practices of the society into which the individual is born.

29. Democracy was the best safeguard against unwarranted infringement of individual rights. She believed that a balance between Western democratic practices and the Eastern emphasis on harmony and cooperation had enhanced enjoyment of individual human rights in a manner consonant with family and community responsibilities, with due regard for the rights of minorities.

30. There was a need for dialogue based on tolerance and a desire for mutual understanding. It was counterproductive to adopt positions of superiority, pointing the accusing finger at less than perfect neighbours. At the same time, Singapore did not condone massive violations of human rights by brutal regimes. The upcoming World Conference on Human Rights would provide an opportunity to assess the extent to which Member States had promoted understanding of human rights and to evaluate the different approaches to their implementation.

31. Archbishop MARTINO (Permanent Observer of the Holy See) said that the Special Rapporteur's report to the forty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights had demonstrated the continued interest of the international community in the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief. In the wake of the vast political changes that had occurred during the last few years in central and eastern Europe, the number of countries with official policies of religious persecution had notably diminished.

32. Not all instances of religious intolerance and persecution originated from people who were radically opposed to any form of religion. It was often in the name of one religion that members of another persuasion were discriminated against. Historically, the banner of religion had been waved to inflame enmities rooted in interests that had little to do with religion itself, such as political power, economic disparities, social tensions and racial intolerance.

33. Through ages, people had been willing to sacrifice everything, including their lives, in order to remain true to their religious convictions. Religious tolerance did not connote repudiation or diminishing of that deep conviction; rather, it demanded respect for the freedom of religious conviction and practices of others. The desire to share one's own religious beliefs with others of different persuasions should be protected. On the other hand, no coercion or pressure should be exerted in disseminating

(Archbishop Martino, Permanent Observer, Holy See)

religious faith. Furthermore, it was the duty of Governments to protect against possible abuses committed on the pretext of freedom of religion. It should be noted in that connection that the report of the Special Rapporteur mentioned the frequent contradictions between national legislations, which almost universally proclaimed the right of freedom of religion, and the implementation of administrative measures which violated that right.

34. It was vital that people receive proper education regarding the true meaning of freedom and tolerance and religious communities should be at the forefront in educating their members. Governments should make every effort not to exploit religious differences and conflicts which were not of a religious nature, such as ethnic strife or issues of political, economic or social nature. Equity demanded that believers of all faiths enjoy freedom of religion, even where there were religious majorities of a single faith.

35. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the 12 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), drew attention to an unfortunate divergence of views as to what constituted human rights. Some sought to limit human rights to civil and political rights. It appeared not to matter to the proponents of that view whether people starved, were plagued by disease, lacked shelter or other basic human essentials, as long as they enjoyed freedom of speech and could participate freely in choosing their Governments. Others including the CARICOM States viewed human rights as an indivisible cluster of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, critical to human survival.

36. The CARICOM States vigorously condemned human rights abuses such as arbitrary arrest and detention, summary execution, torture, racial discrimination, enforced disappearance, religious intolerance, ethnic cleansing and ethnic tensions, and, particularly, the persistence of vestiges of apartheid. They welcomed the completion of a new instrument, the draft Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguisitic minorities, the Declaration on the protection of all persons from enforced disappearance and the adoption by the Commission on Human Rights of resolution 1992/11 calling for a study on the impact of extreme poverty on the enjoyment of human rights.

37. The CARICOM States noted with appreciation the Secretary-General's report on the effective implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development concerning, inter alia, the measures taken by Governments, United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies to implement the right to development. The CARICOM States held the view that education and information were essential to the achievement of lasting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and supported General Assembly resolution 43/128, which had launched the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights.

38. CARICOM commended the work of the Centre for Human Rights and other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies. While its member States

(Mr. Maycock, Barbados)

supported programmes of cooperation between the United Nations and regional bodies, they wished to underscore that cultural diversity should be taken into account in planning regional training courses and workshops and looked forward to the inclusion of the CARICOM region in future plans. They also urged that the Centre be provided with an appropriate level of financial and human resources to support its expanding workload and therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal (A/47/702) to provide additional funds for the Centre.

39. While the elaboration of a comprehensive body of human rights law was a supreme achievement of the United Nations, ratification of human rights instruments did not in itself guarantee implementation. The international community was therefore greatly indebted to Treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) for the crucial monitoring role they performed.

40. The CARICOM States strictly upheld the principle of the rule of law and strongly condemned breaches of the electoral process wherever they occurred. The tragic situation of the people of Haiti remained a major preoccupation of the Heads of Governments of CARICOM States. They were numbed by the revelations in the Special Rapporteur's report on the Situation of human rights in Haiti (A/47/621), with regard to the persistent and systematic violations of human rights in that country. They felt confident that as part of its commitment to electoral assistance, the United Nations would devise strategies aimed at reinstating the duly elected Government of President Aristide. The adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 47/20, entitled "Democracy and Human Rights in Haiti", provided the Organization with sufficient flexibility to take decisive action.

41. The CARICOM States did not believe that postponement of the forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights was a preferred option and hoped that consensus could be reached on the draft agenda A/C.3/47/L.18 for the Conference. While they understood the need to control the proliferation of human rights instruments, they believed that new crises could arise in the field of human rights which did not fall within the purview of existing mandates and instruments, and, therefore, cautioned against any arbitrary prejudgements concerning the need for additional instruments. Regardless of the outcome of the Conference, the CARICOM States were of the view that an impartial approach to human rights situations was imperative and would help to correct the perception by some that there was selectivity and non-objectivity in the application of human rights norms and standards.

42. Mr. VAN DER HEIJDEN (Netherlands) expressed deep concern about the vast number of human rights violations in many parts of the world and the continuing disregard by many Governments of their international legal obligations in the field of human rights, which no crisis could justify.

(Mr. Van Der Heijden, Netherlands)

43. Women and children were especially vulnerable and they were often the innocent and helpless victims of violence and human rights violations. Violations against women were amply documented in reports by Amnesty International and other sources. In times of civil turmoil or armed conflict the violence intensified and new forms of violations developed, an example being the alleged rape of Muslim women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but abuses of all kinds were commonplace at all times and, alarmingly, were increasing worldwide. In many cultures such abuses were treated less seriously than other violent crimes, and women were often denied the power to counter the threats against them. His delegation therefore welcomed the draft declaration on violence against women adopted by the inter-sessional working group of the Commission on the Status of Women, and looked forward to its adoption.

44. Children were more vulnerable to human rights violations than any other group. Millions of children continued to die as a result of hunger, disease and armed conflict. There were more than 30 million street children, and infants accounted for half of the 18 million refugees. In countries all over the world children were tortured, killed or unjustly imprisoned by government agents. A particularly worrying development in developing and developed countries alike, was the increase in child prostitution for the tourist industry, representing a new form of slavery. There were still several hundred thousand child soldiers, some as young as seven years old, and forced enlistment was a common practice. His Government considered the age-limit of 15 for recruitment into the armed forces, provided for in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to be far too low. Children continued to be sold into employment, preventing them from having access to education and other opportunities. The ILO estimate of 88 million working children between the ages of 10 and 14 in 1982 was no doubt higher today.

45. Although socio-economic needs were often the root cause of such abuse, the exploitation of children and the violation of their human rights could never be justified by poverty or underdevelopment. Human rights were and must be an essential component of sustainable development. Although there were laws to safeguard the human rights of children in most countries, law enforcement was inadequate, with law enforcement officers often ignoring the problem or contributing to it through corruption or collusion. Governments were to blame for failing to institute adequate investigations, prosecution and safeguards.

46. The Netherland delegation was not advocating the establishment of new human rights instruments, but considered that women and children required special protection on account of their vulnerability.

47. Mr. SLABY (Czechoslovakia) said that his country, which had always supported the idea of convening the World Conference on Human Rights, was concerned that not all regional groups or States were preparing responsibly for the Conference and regretted the failure to reach agreement on the agenda of the Conference and delays in working out the basic guidelines for the final document.

(Mr. Slaby, Czechoslovakia)

48. The Conference should prepare a blueprint for human rights activities for the next decade, particularly in the context of unforeseen recent developments which had led to the disintegration of States, the outbreak of armed conflicts, ethnic hatred and racially motivated clashes. It should focus on underscoring the universality of basic human rights instruments, strengthening existing monitoring mechanisms and securing technical assistance for the development of national human rights protection infrastructure. The draft resolution that his country would sponsor met those criteria.

49. Czechoslovakia welcomed the completion of the draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and hoped that the related draft resolution would be adopted by the General Assembly. The declaration and the International Year for the World's Indigenous People represented a milestone in the fight for equal status for all population groups. His delegation also looked forward to the adoption of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

50. Since Czechoslovakia attached importance to rationalizing and improving the efficiency of United Nations human rights bodies, it considered the revision of the agenda of the Commission on Human Rights fully justified and hoped it would be implemented as soon as possible. It supported the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights, including the recommendation to increase the funding of its activities. In the matter of staff resources preference should be given to candidates from under-represented States or regional groups, in accordance with the principle of equitable grographical representation.

51. In implementation of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, he supported the provision of electoral assistance by the United Nations to Member States at their request and the establishment of the necessary machinery for that purpose. He also endorsed the request to reinforce the Centre for Human Rights for that purpose, and the provisional guidelines on electoral assistance prepared by the Secretariat.

52. Noting with concern the manifestations of religious intolerance in various parts of the world, he supported the Special Rapporteur's recommendation that a binding instrument concerning intolerance and discrimination on grounds of religion or belief might eventually be elaborated.

53. In the context of refugee flows in the former Yugoslavia, the Committee's discussion on human rights and mass exoduses was highly relevant, and its denunciation of the policy of "ethnic cleansing" was commendable. His country, which continued to condemn human rights violations in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, was making substantial efforts to host refugees from the affected areas.

54. The holding of the first special session of the Commission on Human Rights, and its results, constituted an important precedent for enhancing the

(Mr. Slaby, Czechoslovakia)

Commission's role in monitoring the observance of human rights throughout the world. With regard to the situation in South Africa, his country fully supported the positive changes under way and looked forward to the resumption of negotiations between the parties concerned.

55. The two new independent States to emerge from Czechoslovakia would fully assume their international obligations and were determined, as witnessed by the replacement of the current federal system, to effect the transition and resolve outstanding issues in a legal, constitutional and peaceful manner.

56. Mr. HALINEN (Finland) said that the World Conference on Human Rights would provide States, which had the primary responsibility for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, with an opportunity to present the world community with a progressive human rights agenda. Preparations for the Conference should concentrate on substantive issues, particularly those to be dealt with in the final document. The concept of democracy and the links between human rights and development must be the basis for that preparatory work.

57. The results of the Conference should be commensurate with the importance placed by the Charter on human rights. To that end, a more effective implementation of existing instruments and standards was vital. The Conference also provided an opportunity to assess progress made. While there had been notable achievements, massive and serious violations of human rights persisted. Human rights crises and humanitarian catastrophes frequently coincided, as in Sudan and Somalia, but had been inadequately addressed by the world community. An effective human rights component was an essential part of any measures taken to bring peace to those areas.

58. It was hoped that the draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities would be adopted by consensus, thus improving the situation of minorities and strengthening international peace and security. The implementation of that declaration called for greater coordination and cooperation with Member States and with regional organizations such as the Council of Europe and, in particular, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which had recently decided to establish an office of High Commissioner for National Minorities. A CSCE expert mission was currently beginning its work in the Baltic States, where cooperation with the United Nations would be crucial.

59. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Rigoberta Menchu, who symbolized the struggle for social justice for indigenous peoples, aptly coincided with the launching of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. The situation in her country remained precarious and required action by the world community.

(Mr. Halinen, Finland)

60. In order to defuse escalating ethnic conflicts, the United Nations must be able to rely more on early warning, fact-finding and mediation missions. Efforts made to strengthen the Organization's conflict prevention capacity were welcome.

61. The allocation of the Organization's financial resources did not properly reflect the priority accorded to the promotion of human rights in its activities. More attention should be given to the funding and effectiveness of existing arrangements, including the Centre for Human Rights.

62. His Government had fully endorsed the convening of the special session of the Commission on Human Rights, and welcomed the adoption of the resolution on the situation of human rights in the former Yugoslavia. On that subject, the policy and practice of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Herzegovina was a crime against humanity and must cease immediately, as must all other human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia. His Government favoured the early establishment of an international tribunal to deal with alleged war crimes.

63. Full implementation of the United Nations human rights instruments must remain the guiding principle for all Governments, and human rights violations should be open to scrutiny by the appropriate United Nations organs. The reported human rights situations in certain countries gave particular cause for concern. The situation in Iraq remained serious and his Government was deeply concerned by Iraq's policy of widening repression. The staff of the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations should be allowed to carry out their work unhindered, and the Iraqi Government should accept the deployment of human rights monitors throughout the country, especially in the southern area. The uncooperative attitude of the Government of Iran towards the implementation of the mandate of the Special Representative was regrettable and the human rights situation there remained a cause of concern. His Government was also seriously concerned about the maintenance of the death sentence imposed on Mr. Salman Rushdie. It deplored the human rights violations in Myanmar, despite recent efforts to improve its image abroad. The military authorities must comply with the results of the 1990 democratic elections and free the remaining political prisoners.

64. He laid stress on burden-sharing and joint action to achieve better results in the field of human rights, taking advantage of a period when the United Nations enjoyed enhanced credibility and authority.

65. Ms. AIOUAZE (Algeria) said that her country was firmly committed to ensuring the enjoyment of human rights through its domestic legislation and the international treaties to which it was a party. Algeria's constitution guaranteed human rights and fundamental freedoms, a multiparty system, and freedom of the press and association. Her country's commitment to democracy was accompanied by a rejection of all forms of violence, extremism and intolerance. Algeria had become a party to the basic international human rights instruments, was complying with its reporting obligations under their

(Ms. Aiouaze, Algeria)

terms and had established follow-up mechanisms for implementing their provisions.

66. The promotion of human rights required an integrated approach. States had the responsibility to promote civil and political rights and also to come to grips with economic and social problems. While there was no development without democracy, neither could there be democracy without development. Overcoming the acute poverty affecting at least a fifth of the world's population was the greatest human rights challenge. In that connection, she stressed the importance of the right to development, as set forth in General Assembly resolution 41/128.

67. The forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights was an important event, which should take account of the problems facing developing countries and recognize the specific historical, political, economic and cultural characteristics of societies. The Conference would be an opportunity for reaching a consensus on action to promote the enjoyment of all human rights for all humanity.

68. Mr. YOUSIF (Sudan), exercising his right of reply, said that the statements made by the representatives of Norway and Slovenia at the Committee's 49th meeting with regard to the human rights situation in the Sudan were based on false information and that the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom had presented a one-sided view of that situation. The Commission on Human Rights had decided to investigate certain individual complaints of human rights violations in the Sudan. An independent expert had just concluded a visit to that country and would report on that subject to the Commission in February 1993. Furthermore, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General had recently visited the Sudan and would also report at that time to the Commission on the situation of displaced persons in the country. In the circumstances, it was only fair and logical for the representatives of Norway and Slovenia to await the outcome of those investigations before reaching the type of conclusions put forward in their remarks. It was also reasonable for the Committee to postpone taking action on a draft resolution dealing with an issue which was still under consideration by another competent body of the United Nations.

69. There was absolutely no detention without trial in the Sudan. It was maliciously false to proclaim that the Sudanese Government had forcibly displaced legal residents against their will or had committed acts of racial discrimination against any group. The executions referred to had been justified legal action taken by the competent authorities against persons convicted of treason and mass destruction of life. The Sudan's record in caring for displaced persons and hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries was well known to all concerned, including the sponsors of the draft resolution on refugees and displaced persons before the Committee. Sudan had never impeded relief operations and its record of cooperation with the United Nations had been demonstrated through the agreements concluded between his Government and the Organization.

(Mr. Yousif, Sudan)

70. His delegation was very much concerned that the manner in which human rights issues were discussed in the Committee would seriously affect the Committee's ability to act with impartiality, especially when proposals put forward were politically motivated. He hoped that the representatives of Norway and Slovenia would reconsider the erroneous statements that they had made with regard to the Sudan. The veracity of the accusations levelled against his country was yet to be determined by the investigations being carried out by the Commission on Human Rights.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.